(c) and (d) The capacity utilization of coal industry in the country has been 89 per cent for Coal India Ltd. and 84 per cent for Singareni Collieries Co. Ltd. in 1990-91.

Privatisation of coal mines

1657. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU:

DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY:

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE:

SHRI SURESH KALMADI:

SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:

SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL:

SARDAR JAGJIT SINGH AURORA:

SHRI RANJIT SINGH:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Bank has been pressuring India to open up the new coal mining areas to the private sector for developmet as reported in the Hindustan Times of 24th November, 1991;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Government in this regard;

(d) whether in view of serious resources crunch with Government, there is any plan to privatise the coal sector; and

(e) if so the details thereof including the number and criteria for issuing licences?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NAYMAGOUDA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) and (e) It has been suggested that new coal based thermal power plants may be allowed their own captive coal mines. The Government is yet to take a view on this suggestion.

Recognition of Hindi by Foreign Countries

1658. SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of foreign countries that have recognised that Hindi language; and

(b) whether any country or countries outside India have instituted litterary awards for the promotion of Hindi language; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) While Hindi is widely used in several foreign countries, we are not aware of any country having recognised Hindi as its official language.

(b) Mauritius has started as literary award in November, 1991 for promotion of Hindi. This award is called "Sahitya Puraskar" and is awarded by the Mahatma Gandhi Institute in Mauritius. Information has been asked for from other Missions and will be submitted to the House in due course.

Indian Prisoners in Iraq

1659. SHRI JAGDISH JANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Indians are missing from Kuwait;

(b) whether they have been taken hostage by Iraqi forces when they abandoned Kuwait at the end of Gulf war; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken to release these Indians from